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Blacksburg

Christiansburg

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Blooming at Sinkland Farms 4th Annual Sunflower Festival

Angelica Ramos
Contributing Writer

MONTGOMERY CO-Sinkland Farms opened their award winning Sunflower Festival last weekend and will be hosting it until Aug. 18, 2024 with sunflowers and activities for all to enjoy.

Sinkland Farm has over eight acres of sunflowers for all to enjoy. According to Sinkland Farms, this means there will be over 200,000 sunflower blooms for guests to see, pick and enjoy. Guests will need to purchase tickets, which grants them access to the festival and one sunflower per person per ticket. Guests are encouraged to purchase an additional flower for two dollars all the way up to 10 additional flowers for the price of 15 dollars. There are plenty of beautiful sunflowers for everyone to enjoy and get lost in the fields of flowers.

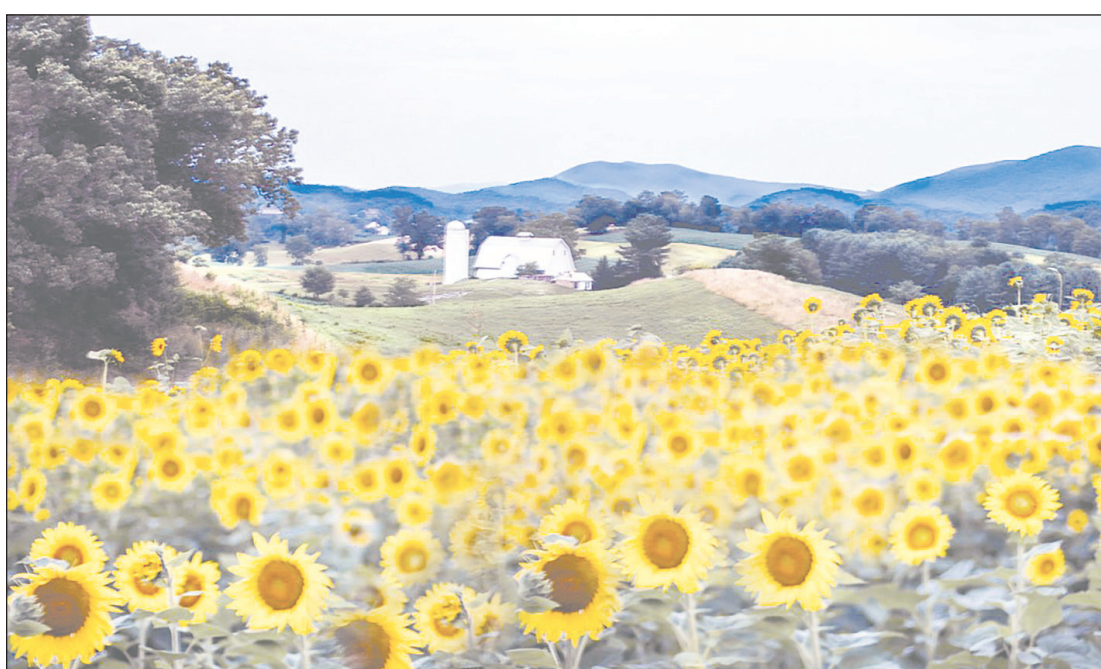


PHOTO BY RENEE'S PHOTOS AND DESIGN, COURTESY OF SINKLAND FARMS

The Sinkland Farms Sunflower Festival is underway and lasts until Aug. 18.

The flowers aren't the only things at the Sunflower Festival, the event weekends will be packed with fun, food and

music for guests of all ages. There is a kid zone for the pint-sized guests or the young

at heart that includes a giant jump pad. There will be giant slides, ice cream, a petting zoo,

pig races and pony rides. Live musical artists are hosted every weekend of the festival with popular musical artists such as Jimothy, performing on August 17.

Visitors can take pictures with their flowers or with the iconic love sculpture atop the hill or taste delicious food from the food trucks at the bottom of the hill. For the adults, there will be craft beers and wine. There will also be many local vendors to shop from on top of all the festivities and food available. Although many know Sinkland Farms for their annual Pumpkin Festival, their Sunflower Festival grows every year and brings the community out during the summer as well. With the Sunflower Festival being newer, it has already won awards like Most Unique Festival by Blue Ridge Outdoors in 2022, and has become a popular event in Montgomery County.

Blacksburg Town Council releases statement regarding Liam Watson

BLACKSBURG – Blacksburg Town Council released a joint statement Monday regarding the charges against Town Council Member Liam Watson, who was indicted July 24, 2024 on felony charges related to election fraud.

Watson was indicted by a Montgomery County grand jury. The Virginia State Police began an investigation in March 2024 after an allegation was made regarding election fraud. The investigation was assisted by the United States Postal Inspection Service. Watson was arrested on three counts of felony election fraud and one felony count of illegally voting.

The town council statement says the council will not take any action at the present time and will allow the judicial process to unfold before determining a course of action.

"Recently the Blacksburg Town Council was made aware, through local news reports, of the arrest of Council Member Liam Watson," the statement reads. "At this time the town council has no additional information regarding the allegations beyond what is contained in the indictment. We trust that our legal system, which is based on a presumption of innocence, will address this matter in a timely and just manner.

The town council will take appropriate actions, as necessary, as the process unfolds and more facts become available."

"The town council is a non-partisan elected body committed to upholding the principles of transparency and integrity," the statement continues. "We understand the concerns this situation may raise within our community and assure the community that the town council remains dedicated to serving the best interests of Blacksburg and its residents.

Staff report

See Broadway's "Mary Poppins" today and tomorrow in Blacksburg

Performances Saturday, Aug. 10 at 2 and 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m.



PHOTO BY JON FLEMING

The Summer Musical Enterprise's production of Broadway's "Mary Poppins" runs through this Sunday at the Moss Arts Center in Blacksburg. Leading roles in this lively musical are played by Anna Gibbs and Zack Brown. Performances are Saturday at 2 and 7 p.m. and Sunday at 2 p.m. Admission is \$20-\$40. Moss Arts Center at Virginia Tech is located at 190 Alumni Mall, Blacksburg.

Community Health Center of the New River Valley adds therapist

The Community Health Center of the New River Valley (CHCNRV) is announcing Consuella Hoston, MSW, has joined the center's behavioral health department.

Hoston holds a Master of Social Work from Radford University and brings extensive experience in providing therapeutic services and support to individuals and families. Prior to joining CHCNRV, she most recently worked at a private practice where she performed clinical assessments, developed treatment plans, and managed a caseload of over 25 clients per week.

Hoston has a robust background in various therapeutic techniques, including Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Motivational Interviewing, and Trauma-Informed Care. She has worked in the behavioral health field with clients of all



PHOTO COURTESY OF CHCNRV

Consuella Hoston, MSW

ages in the New River Valley since 2011. "Consuella is committed to fostering a supportive and empowering environment for her clients," said Michelle Brauns, Chief Executive Officer of CHCNRV. "Her expertise in mental health and dedication to community service aligns with our mission to provide accessible and high-quality health services."

See THERAPIST, Page 1

Gun Aware Project volunteers attending MCPS open house events

CHRISTIANSBURG – Volunteers from The Gun Aware Project will be attending the upcoming open house events held at all Montgomery County Public Schools.

As part of its mission to promote the safe storage of firearms and prevent gun violence, volunteers from the Gun Aware Project will be distributing free gun locks to community members.

This initiative is a collaborative effort with BeSMART, an organization dedicated to firearm safety education. Together, the Gun Aware Project and BeSMART aim to raise awareness about the importance of secure firearm storage and provide practical tools to help families and individuals safeguard their homes.

"We are excited to partner with BeSMART and take proactive steps to ensure our community is informed about gun safety," Co-Founder of GAP Karen Fischer said. "By providing free gun locks, we hope to reduce the risk of accidental shootings and unauthorized access to firearms, particularly by children."

In addition to distributing gun locks, GAP volunteers will be available to answer questions regarding the safe storage of firearms. The goal is to equip attendees with the knowledge and resources needed to store firearms safely and responsibly.

"We strive to keep our students and the Montgomery County community safe from gun violence," MCPS Superintendent Bernard F. Bragen, Jr. said. "We are committed to taking action to educate our children and parents about the importance of safe gun storage."

In April 2024, the MCPS School Board passed a resolution requiring MCPS to notify parents of their legal requirement to safely secure firearms. Virginia Code 18.2-56.2. states: "It shall be unlawful for any person to recklessly leave a loaded, unsecured firearm in such a manner as to endanger the life or limb of any child under the age of 14. Any person violating the provisions of this subsection shall be guilty of a Class 1 misdemeanor."



GRAPHIC COURTESY OF MCPS

UPCOMING EVENTS

Saturday, Aug. 10:

Fish Fry

Mount Tabor Ruritan Club will hold its August Fish Fry 5 - 7 p.m. at Slusser's Chapel Picnic Shelter, 1543 Mount Tabor Rd, Blacksburg. Serving fish, fries and slaw; homemade desserts; and beverages. Adults- \$12, children under 12- \$6, under age three -free, carry-outs -\$12. This month, Ronnie Toney and Friends will be playing some Bluegrass for the diners. Held rain or shine. Call or text 540-449-6178 for further information. On Facebook at MtTaborRuritan.

11th Annual Cheeseburger in Parrot-dise

At Warm Hearth Village Center, 2387 Warm Hearth Dr., Blacksburg; 6 -10 p.m. Get ready to dance up an appetite with The Breakfast Club Band and The Panjammers then indulge in refreshing tropical drinks, gourmet cheeseburgers, and delicious Caribbean fare. Don't miss the silent auction featuring one-of-a-kind items and experiences - all to benefit the Warm Hearth Foundation and seniors who call Warm Hearth Village home. In celebration of Warm Hearth's Golden Anniversary, we will have a limited number of special golden tickets with a VIP mix and mingle from 5 - 6 p.m. Tickets on sale now. Visit retire.org and click on Cheeseburger in Parrot-dise in the upper right part of the home page.

Blacksburg Farmers Market

At Market Square Park, 100 Draper Rd SW, Blacksburg; 8 a.m. - 2 p.m. The Blacksburg Farmers Market is a local, family-friendly gathering place in downtown Blacksburg featuring farmers of locally grown produce and meats, alongside artisans of baked goods and handmade crafts. For more information, visit <http://blacksburgfarmersmarket.com>.

Radford Farmer's Market

Every Saturday through October; 9 a.m. - 1 p.m. on the grounds of Glencoe Mansion, 600 Unruh Dr. Visit weekly for an ever-changing supply of homemade goodies, crafts, plants, meats, produce, and more.

Grownup Board Game Club

At the Radford Public Library; 2- 4 p.m. Bring a game, bring a friend, or just bring yourself to the library for some quality grownup board gaming time! Pick a game from our collection or bring something from home and teach us how to play.

Rockin' Main Street Concert

On East Main St., Christiansburg, 5-9 p.m. The Town of Christiansburg is hosting Rockin' Main Street, a fun-for-all event with live music from two exciting artists. The evening will start with Solacoustix taking the stage at 5 p.m., performing a wide range of styles including blues, R&B, country and rock. Then at 7 p.m., local singer and songwriter, Travis Reigh will perform, bringing a captivating blend of country and rock, filling a musical void you didn't know you had. Beer, wine, and food trucks will be available at the event. Attendees are encouraged to bring lawn chairs to sit watch the live music. Be sure to bring your IDs if you plan to purchase beer or wine.

Sunday, Aug. 11:

Vintage Market

At Market Square Park, 100 Draper Rd SW, Blacksburg; 10 a.m. - 5 p.m. The market is made up of a carefully chosen group of vendors selling a wide selection of quality vintage items, upcycled crafts, and occasional antiques. For more information, visit blacksburgfarmersmarket.com/vintage-market/.

Monday, Aug. 12:

Radford City Council meeting

The Radford City Council will hold its regularly scheduled meeting at 7 p.m. in council chambers at the Radford Municipal Building, 10 Robertson St., Radford. Citizens are invited to attend and allowed to speak at each meeting. See the agenda at www.radfordva.gov.

Montgomery County Board of Supervisors meeting

Public meetings are normally held the second and fourth Monday of each month at the Montgomery County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St. in Christiansburg. Closed sessions begin at 6 p.m. if needed. Open sessions begin at 7:15 p.m. Citizens are invited to attend and allowed to speak at each meeting. All regular meetings of the Board of Supervisors are rebroadcast on Montgomery County Comcast and Shentel Channels 190 daily.

Monday, Aug. 12- Friday, Aug. 23:

CAC Annual Maintenance

The Christiansburg Aquatic Center will be closed for annual maintenance to complete work that cannot be completed while the center is open.

Tuesday, Aug. 13:

Blacksburg Town Council meeting

The council meets in regular session the second and fourth Tuesdays of each month at 6:30 p.m. in the Roger E. Hedgepeth Chambers of the Blacksburg Municipal Building, 300 S. Main St. These meetings are open to the public and televised live on WTOB Channel 2.

Christiansburg Town Council meeting

Regular town council meetings are held on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month beginning at 7 p.m. in the Council Chambers of Town Hall (100 E. Main St.). The public is welcome and encouraged to attend, with a citizen hearing time reserved at each meeting for residents to bring any matter they desire before the entire council.

Wednesday, Aug. 14:

Blacksburg Farmers Market

At Market Square Park, 100 Draper Rd SW, Blacksburg; 2 - 6 p.m. The Blacksburg Farmers Market is a local, family-friendly gathering place in downtown Blacksburg featuring farmers of locally grown produce and meats, alongside artisans of baked goods and handmade crafts. For more information, visit <http://blacksburgfarmersmarket.com>.

Market Square Jam

Blacksburg's Market Square Jam is an official Crooked Road affiliated venue that provides fun and entertainment on Wednesday evenings, June through September. The Jam takes place at Market Square Park from 7-9 p.m. For more information and a list of hosts, please visit blacksburg.gov/marketsquarejam.

Thursday, Aug. 15:

Sons of Confederate Veterans meeting

The Sons of Confederate Veterans, Stuart Horse Artillery Camp 1784 will meet at 7 p.m. at Aly's Italian Family Restaurant on 3204 Riner Road. Members of the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) are also invited to attend. Member Seth Gravely will present Part two of his talk on the "History of the 29th Virginia Infantry". For further information, please call 540-320-4315 or 540-239-9864.

Sunday, Aug. 18:

Faith and Democracy presentation

The local group Defending Democracies will host a special presentation and discussion featuring Chris Crawford, Policy Strategist for Protect Democracy. We'll hear why democracy is important to faith communities and consider actions we can take, both as individuals and as faith communities, to support the defense of our democracy. Join us, 2:30-4 p.m., at Blacksburg United Methodist Church, Whisner Building, 111 Church St. SE, Blacksburg (parking in lots off of Lee St.).

Tuesday, Aug. 20:

August TRIAD-Artificial Intelligence (AI)

TRIAD/S.A.L.T. is a cooperative effort of law enforcement agencies (police/sheriffs), senior citizens, and senior organization, focused on reducing crimes against our most vulnerable citizens: our seniors. Presentation on AI will cover the history and what is AI. What is AI being used for in general. What areas you may see it in and how you will be affect by AI. What is coming soon and what is in the future. Followed by Q&A. TRIAD meets the third Tuesday of each month at the Christiansburg Recreation Center at 1:30 p.m. You are invited to attend.

Saturday, Aug. 24:

Heritage Day

Sponsored by the Montgomery Museum of Art & History. Immerse yourself in the rich history of Christiansburg, 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., in downtown Christiansburg, 4 E Main St. and 300 South Pepper St. Step into the past with over 40 vendors showcasing crafts, artifacts, and more. Indulge your taste buds with a variety of delectable treats from food trucks while enjoying the delightful tunes of live music and dance throughout the day. Keep the little ones entertained with a hayride and specially curated activities just for them.

Rotary Club of Blacksburg yard sale

The Annual August Yard Sale will be held 7 - 11 a.m. at the Blacksburg YMCA parking lot on North Main Street. Featured will be a wide range of items including household items, kitchen appliances, monitors, furniture, tools, bikes, and much more. Proceeds go to local projects as well as local scholarships for high school students offered each year by the Rotary Club.

Halloween has already invaded retail stores, economic expert explains why

Your eyes aren't deceiving you, Halloween decorations have already started popping up in retail stores. So much so, you would think the holiday that brings us costume parties and trick-or-treaters has already arrived and it's only August.

Bewildering as the premature arrival of spooky merchandise might seem, the impetus for retailers to get the jump on a holiday — whether it's Halloween, Christmas or the Fourth of July — can be readily explained as simple economic behavior. Jadrian Wooten, a Virginia Tech professor of economics, explained what drives these early holiday displays.

Q: From an economics standpoint, why are we seeing Halloween appear in the stores as early as July?

"This is a great example of game theory in action. Retailers compete with each other to capture as much consumer spending as possible. By being the first to roll out their Halloween products, they're trying to grab the early-bird shoppers and secure a bigger share of holiday spending. It's a classic game of strategic timing — if one store puts stuff out earlier, others will likely follow to avoid losing out on those initial sales. If they're late this year, they'll be sure to make up for it next year."

Q: Why is Halloween such big business?

"It's a holiday that combines retail and entertainment — the ultimate spending combination. The National Retail Federation says that Americans spent around \$12.2 billion on Halloween in 2023. It comes in just ahead of Fourth of July, Super Bowl, and St. Patrick's Day. People love to dress up, throw parties, and decorate their homes. Spending is practically built into this tradition and retailers are happy to offer shoppers everything from costumes and decorations to spooky-themed snacks. If retailers can have the holiday last for weeks, it gives businesses more time in those profits."

Q: What role does spending on major holidays like Halloween play in the economy?

"Major holidays like Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas are like mini-economic booms. They create spikes in consumer spending that are spaced out in regular intervals and can easily be tracked year-to-year. That's incredibly helpful for the retail and hospitality sectors. The spending also creates a ripple effect to other adjacent industries. As holiday sales increase, businesses hire more employees who also spend more on stuff. There are also all the secondary industries impacted, like transportation, packaging, and advertising."

Q: What about consumers who really go all out for Halloween?



PHOTO COURTESY PEXELS VIA VIRGINIA TECH

Halloween merchandise is already popping up in stores.

"Holiday spending can provide excellent examples of the economic concept of conspicuous consumption — like that neighbor who's always driving the newest car. In the context of Halloween, it's really easy to see this with things like pet costumes: people like dressing their dogs up as superheroes and pumpkins. It's a classic example of people spending money on things that showcase their social status or make a statement about having disposable income. It's a reminder that our spending isn't always about practicality. Sometimes people do things just to have fun and show off."

Q: Is this sort of spending good or bad for the economy?

"It's like a double-edged sword. Holiday spending can help various industries and create seasonal jobs. It can boost consumer confidence — when people are out and about spending, it shows they're feeling optimistic about their financial situations. If we're looking at it from a consumerism angle, though, the downside is that increased holiday spending can take away from other important financial decisions like savings and investment. Also, I would argue that a bigger negative issue is that a lot of holiday-related products aren't exactly environmentally friendly, which can have long-term consequences."

Carilion Family Medicine – Blacksburg celebrates new renovations

BLACKSBURG – Carilion Clinic celebrated the new renovation of its Family Medicine – Blacksburg practice (901 Plantation Road) with a ribbon-cutting ceremony with clinical teams on Thursday, July 25.

The local family medicine practice, which opened in 1998, has completed significant renovations, adding 12 patient exam rooms and welcoming four new providers to the team. Renovations began in January 2024, and the practice remained open to patients throughout the project.

“These renovations allow us to offer enhanced patient care, increased appointment availability and a more efficient experience,” said Michael Jeremiah, M.D., family and community medicine medical chair. “We are so excited to welcome new patients into our upgraded space.”

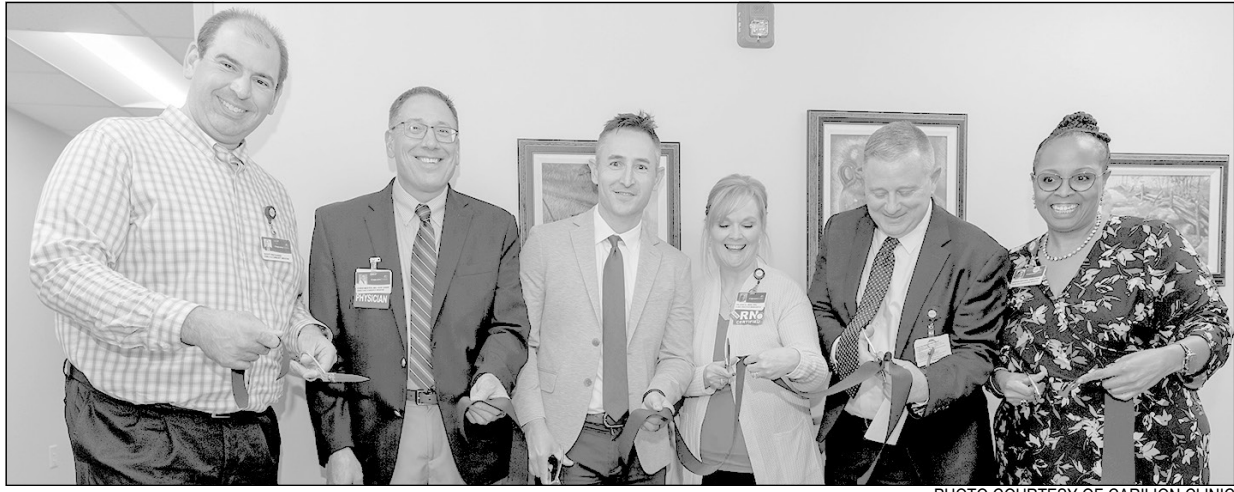


PHOTO COURTESY OF CARILION CLINIC

Carilion Clinic leaders celebrate the ribbon cutting of the renovated and expanded facilities at Family and Community Medicine Plantation Road during a ceremony on Thursday, July 25, 2024, in Blacksburg, Virginia. L to R: Scott Pritchard; Christopher Mertes, MD; Isaac Spence, DO; Valerie Dunford; Roger Roper; Anissa Brown.

Blacksburg paving work to continue Monday, Aug. 12

Due to inclement weather, paving work on North Main Street in Blacksburg will be delayed. Based on the projected weather impacts, paving and millwork is now scheduled to begin Monday, Aug. 12.

Annual paving will be conducted on North Main Street between the intersections of Mount Tabor Road and Giles Road. Paving work will continue on day shift and be conducted between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Alternating lane closures with flagger and pilot car will be employed to maintain traffic. Work will be coordinated to limit impacts and maintain access

to adjacent residents and businesses. Short duration closures of entrances should be expected to complete milling and resurfacing operations. Work is expected to take two-three days, weather permitting.

Annual paving will also continue Monday, Aug. 12 on Hubbard Street/Airport Road between the intersections of South Main and Dehart Street. In addition, paving work will include much of King Street between the intersections of South Main and Hubbard Street.

Paving work will move to day shift and be conducted

between the hours of 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. Alternating lane closures will be employed to maintain traffic and work coordinated to limit impacts and maintain access to adjacent residents and businesses. Short duration closures of entrances should be expected to complete milling and resurfacing operations. Work is expected to take two-three days, weather permitting.

For more information, contact Joshua Middleton, Assistant Public Works Director, at 540-443-1241 or JMiddleton@blacksburg.gov.

Town of Blacksburg

Marketplace

ourvalley.org

THE FINCASTLE HERALD Vinton Messenger THE NEW CASTLE RECORD SALEM TIMES REGISTER News Messenger RADFORD News Journal

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LEGAL NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE TOWN OF CHRISTIANSBURG TOWN COUNCIL

The Town of Christiansburg Town Council will hold a Public Hearing on Tuesday, August 13, 2024, at 7:00 PM in the Council Chambers of the Christiansburg Town Hall, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, Virginia 24073. The purpose of the public hearing is to receive public comments concerning:

A. Rezoning request by JTCI Electric LLC, Property Owner, and Joseph Iskandar, Applicant, to rezone property located on the West side of Depot St. NW, also adjacent to the South side of 401 Depot St. NW, identified as Tax Parcel 526-((A))-158; (Parcel ID 070666), consisting of approximately 0.254 acre, from Two-Family Residential District (R-2) to General Business District (B-3). The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

B. Conditional Use Permit request by JTCI Electric LLC, Property Owner, and Joseph Iskandar, Applicant, to allow one (1) residential dwelling unit (apartment) on the second floor of the proposed "General Office" in the General Business District (B-3) on property located on the West side of Depot St. NW, also adjacent to the South side of 401 Depot St. NW, identified as Tax Parcel 526-((A))-158; (Parcel ID 070666), consisting of approximately 0.254 acre. The property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map of the 2013 Christiansburg Comprehensive Plan.

A copy of the applications, the Town's Zoning Map, Zoning Ordinance, and Future Land Use Map may be viewed in the Planning Department Office, 100 E. Main Street, Christiansburg, VA 24073 during normal office hours of 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday.

Contact Retta Jackson, Planning Director, at (540) 382-6128, ext. 1120 or by email at rjackson@christiansburg.org, with any questions or if you require reasonable accommodations.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Planning Commission hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on August 21, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to hear citizen comments regarding the Planning Commission's intention to act on the following Special Use Permit request:

A request by Foster Ridpath for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a restaurant (gross floor area of 2,000 sq ft or less). The property is owned by Kimberly D. Ridpath and is located at 3035 Riner Road. The property is further identified as Tax Map 106-11-3 (Parcel ID: 031860), 1.904 acres, zoned Agricultural (A-1) in the Riner Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Rural in the 2025 Comprehensive Plan.

Copies of the proposed plans, applications, ordinances or amendments may be examined at the Department of Planning and GIS Services, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Suite 2A, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or at <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/pendingapplications>.

Town of Christiansburg Notice of Public Hearing

Notice is hereby given that on August 27, 2024 the Town Council of Christiansburg, Virginia (the "Town") will conduct a public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, as required under applicable law, in accordance with Section 15-2-2606 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, with respect to the adoption by the Council of a resolution or resolutions, as may be necessary or convenient, regarding the proposed financing of the

development, renovation, equipping and improvement of the Town's waste water treatment facilities located at 2557 Crab Creek Rd., Christiansburg, VA.

The Town proposes to fund the project in part by the issuance of a general obligation bond to be issued in a principal amount not to exceed \$18,600,000. The purpose of the financing is to pay for the costs of improvements needed and required as described above.

The public hearing, which may be continued or adjourned, will be conducted at 7:00PM or as soon thereafter as they matter may be heard, by the Town Council in Council Chambers at the Town Hall located at 100 E. Main St, Christiansburg, Virginia.

Interested persons may appear at such time and place and present their views whether orally or in writing or submit written comments prior to the hearing.

The Town may set time limits on speakers and other rules and procedures for the conduct of this public hearing. Any persons with disabilities are urged to contact the Town Manager's Office at (540) 382-6128 prior to the public hearing to arrange for any necessary accommodations.

For additional information, please contact the Town Manager's Office.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on August 26, 2024 at 7:15 p.m. in the County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to hear citizen comments regarding the Board of Supervisor's intention to act on the following requests:

A request by RWW36, LLC and RWW34, LLC (Agent: Balzer & Associates) to revise the proffered conditions approved previously as part of the rezoning of 9.035 acres located at the intersection of

Tyler Road (US Route 177) and Meadow Creek Road (State Route 658) from Agricultural (A-1) to General Business (GB), originally approved by the Board of Supervisors on September 14, 2009. The revised proffer amendments update the proposed master plan for the development of the site to allow construction of a general store, convenience store with motor fuel sales, and an attached restaurant with drive-through. The revised amendments to the proffered conditions also include proposed conditions related to public water and sewer, entrance improvements, architectural design and standards, and excludes the development of certain other by-right uses permitted in the General Business (GB) Zoning District. The property is located at the intersection of Tyler Road (US Route 177) and Meadow Creek Road (State Route 658), identified as Tax Parcel No(s). 104-4-47 and 104- A 27A-B (Parcel ID Numbers 002244, 008938, and 008939), in the Riner Magisterial District. The property is currently zoned General Business (GB) and lies in an area designated as Urban Expansion in the Comprehensive Plan and Planned Commercial in the Route 177 Corridor Plan.

Copies of the proposed plans, applications, ordinances or amendments may be examined at the Department of Planning and GIS Services, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Suite 2A, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or at <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/pendingapplications>.

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING OF THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Pursuant to the provisions of Section 15.2-2204 & 15.2-2285 of the Code of Virginia of 1950, as amended, the Montgomery County Board of Supervisors hereby gives notice of a public hearing to be held on August 26, 2024 at 7:00 p.m. in the County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Christiansburg, Virginia, in order to hear citizen comments regarding the Board of Supervisor's

intention to act on the following requests:

A request by Steve Graham Living Trust (Agent: Balzer & Associates) to rezone a 20.7 acre portion of 30.1 total acres from Agricultural (A1) to Planned Unit Development, Commercial (PUD-COM), with proffered conditions, to allow a planned mixed-use commercial development. The property is located at 3720 Pricess Fork Road, Blacksburg, at the intersection of Pricess Fork Road (State Route 685) and Brunswick Drive (State Route 1140). The property is further identified as Tax Maps 052- A 14,12,13 (Parcel ID: 007287), 30.1 acres, zoned A-1 Agricultural in the Pricess Fork Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Village Expansion in the 2025 Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan, and is further designated as Low Density Residential in the Pricess Fork Village Plan.

AND

A request by Steve Graham Living Trust (Agent: Balzer & Associates) for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow a Contractor Service Establishment with Outdoor Storage on a portion of a 20.7 acre portion of 30.1 total acres, a use type that is not included in the existing permissible uses in PUD-COM. Contractor Service Establishing with Outdoor Storage is not listed as a permissible use, but could be allowed if it is determined through the Special Use Permit process to be appropriate and compatible with the proposed development and surrounding uses in the PUD-COM Zoning District. The property is located at the intersection of Pricess Fork Road (State Route 685) and Brunswick Drive (State Route 1140). The property is further identified as Tax Maps 052- A 14,12,13 (Parcel ID: 007287), 30.1 acres, zoned A-1 Agricultural in the Pricess Fork Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Village Expansion in the 2025 Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan, and is further designated as Low Density Residential in the Pricess Fork Village Plan.

AND

A request by Steve Graham Living Trust (Agent: Balzer & Associates) for a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow for Multi-family Dwellings on a portion of a 20.7 acre portion of 30.1 total acres, a use type that is not included in the existing permissible uses in PUD-COM. Multi-

Family dwellings are not listed as a permissible use, but could be allowed if it is determined through the Special Use Permit process to be appropriate and compatible with the proposed development and surrounding uses as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance in the PUD-COM Zoning District. The property is located at 3720 Pricess Fork Road, Blacksburg, at the intersection of Pricess Fork Road (State Route 685) and Brunswick Drive (State Route 1140). The property is further identified as Tax Maps 052- A 14,12,13 (Parcel ID: 007287), 30.1 acres, zoned A-1 Agricultural in the Pricess Fork Magisterial District. The property currently lies in an area designated as Village Expansion in the 2025 Montgomery County Comprehensive Plan, and is further designated as Low Density Residential in the Pricess Fork Village Plan. Copies of the proposed plans, applications, ordinances or amendments may be examined at the Department of Planning and GIS Services, County Government Center, 755 Roanoke St., Suite 2A, Christiansburg, Monday through Friday between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. or at <http://www.montgomerycountyva.gov/pendingapplications>.

Legals - City of Radford

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

ON AN ORDINANCE PROPOSING TO GRANT A NON-EXCLUSIVE FRANCHISE TO

CONSTRUCT AND OPERATE A CABLE SYSTEM IN THE CITY OF RADFORD, VIRGINIA, AND INVITING BIDS

The Radford City Council will hold a public hearing on August 12, 2024 at 7:00 P.M. in the Council Chambers at 10 Robertson Street to receive public comment on an ordinance proposing to grant a non-exclusive franchise for the construction and operation of a cable system in the City of Radford, Virginia. A copy

of the full text of the ordinance, including the terms of the proposed franchise agreement, may be obtained by contacting the Office of the City Clerk at (540) 731-3603. In addition, bids are hereby invited for the franchise proposed to be granted under the ordinance. All bids must be in writing and submitted to the Office of the City Clerk at 10 Robertson Street, Radford, Virginia 24141 or at Jenni.Webb@radfordva.gov. ALL BIDS MUST BE RECEIVED BY AUGUST 12, 2024 AT 12 PM. Bids will be opened and read aloud during open session at Council's regular meeting on August 12, 2024 at 7 PM. After the reading of the bids, Council will proceed with consideration of the proposed ordinance and franchise. Council reserves the right to reject any and all bids and to defer action until a subsequent meeting.

Classified Advertising DELIVERS

As election season heats up, so do scammers

Money is key to any political campaign - in fact, it often makes or breaks candidates and defines their success, especially in presidential elections. To get this money into the bank, voters are inundated with emails, texts, mailers, and phone calls asking for donations during campaign seasons. But a Virginia Tech criminologist says to be careful where you send your money and explains how to spot donation scams, which are becoming more and more sophisticated through artificial intelligence (AI).

What trends are we seeing in campaign scams?

“During campaign seasons and leading up to the election, we see an increased volume of campaign scams,” says Thomas Dearden, associate professor of sociology in the College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences. “AI has made these more efficient, effective, and convincing. Social media is a common avenue for spreading these scams and reaching more potential victims.”

How do you spot a campaign donation scam?

“Spotting campaign donation scams is becoming more difficult. AI is used to create fake images, audio, and video of political figures. This media is often difficult to distinguish from the real thing. Still, there are some warning signs. These include unusual donation methods (such as requesting gift cards), difficulty finding contact information, and unsolicited requests.

“The best advice is to avoid all unsolicited donations, including ones from phone calls, social media, or emails. Scammers can use AI to create fake media to make their fraud look legitimate. Only donate directly using the resources found on the campaign’s website.”

What should people look for to know if the donation ask is legitimate?

“With the use of AI and the sophistication of many scams, it is often difficult to know if a campaign fund or political action committee

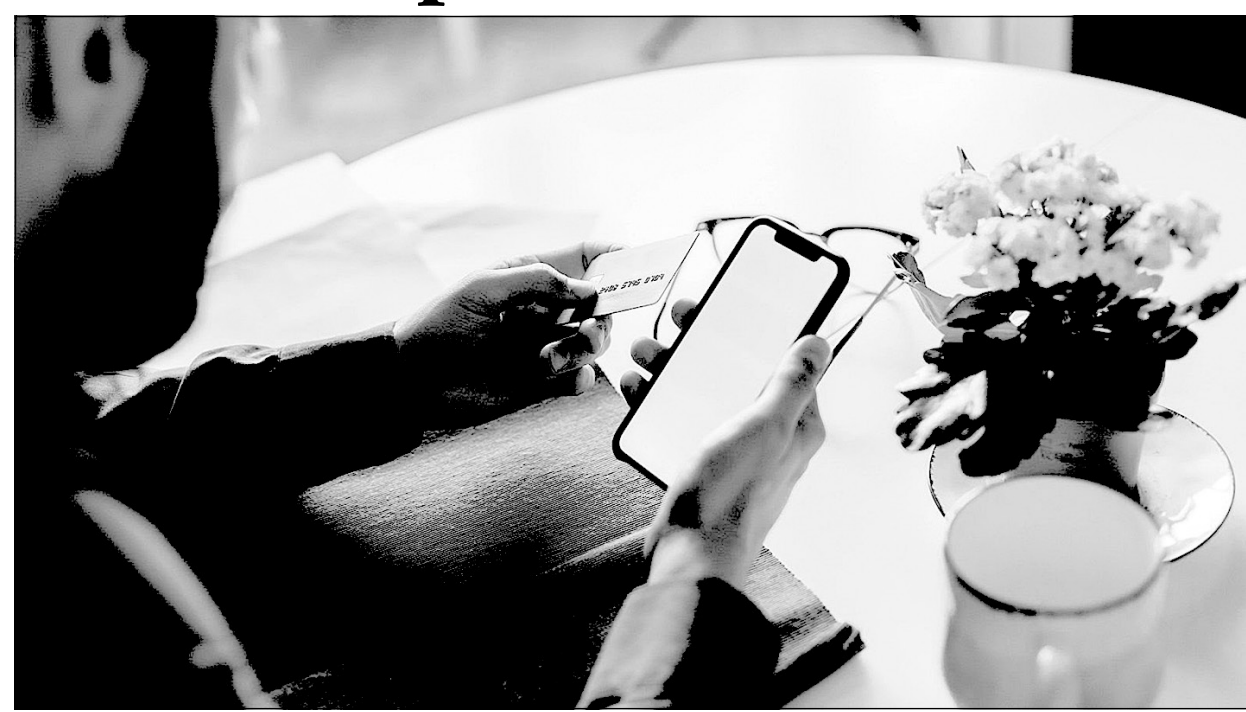


PHOTO COURTESY PEXELS VIA VIRGINIA TECH
A Virginia Tech criminologist says to be careful where you send your money and explains how to spot donation scams, which are becoming more and more sophisticated through artificial intelligence (AI).

(PAC) is fraudulent just by reviewing their materials,” says Dearden. “While there are clues, the best method is to avoid unsolicited donations entirely. Instead, find the campaign website directly. In addition, if donating to a PAC, the Federal Election Commission keeps a list of all registered PACs on its website

(found here). If it is not on the list, do not donate to it.”

If you fall victim to a campaign scam, what should you do?

“If you have been the victim of a scam, contact law enforcement. For campaign scams, a good resource is your local FBI field office. If the

fraud took place online or through social media, another good resource is the Internet Crime Complaint Center.”

Virginia Tech

Virginia gas prices fall from last week

Average gasoline prices in Virginia have fallen 7.1 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.31/g today, according to GasBuddy’s survey of 4,081 stations in Virginia. Prices in Virginia are 7.5 cents per gallon lower than a month ago and stand 36.6 cents per gallon lower than a year ago. The national average price of diesel has fallen 2.3 cents in the last week and stands at \$3.76 per gallon.

According to GasBuddy price reports, the cheapest station in Virginia was priced at \$2.82/g yesterday while the most expensive was \$3.99/g, a difference of \$1.17/g. The lowest price in the state yesterday was \$2.82/g while the highest was \$3.99/g, a difference of \$1.17/g.

The national average price of gasoline has fallen 3.5 cents per gallon in the last week, averaging \$3.44/g today. The national average is down 5.6 cents per gallon from a month ago and stands 37.2 cents per gallon lower than a year ago, according to GasBuddy data compiled from more than 11 million weekly price reports covering over 150,000 gas stations across the country.

Historical gasoline prices in Virginia and the national average going back ten years:

August 5, 2023:	\$3.67/g	(U.S. Average: \$3.81/g)
August 5, 2022:	\$3.87/g	(U.S. Average: \$4.06/g)
August 5, 2021:	\$2.99/g	(U.S. Average: \$3.19/g)
August 5, 2020:	\$1.99/g	(U.S. Average: \$2.17/g)
August 5, 2019:	\$2.48/g	(U.S. Average: \$2.70/g)
August 5, 2018:	\$2.64/g	(U.S. Average: \$2.86/g)

Neighboring areas and their current gas prices:
 Roanoke- \$3.25/g, down 8.2 cents per gallon from last week’s \$3.33/g.
 Richmond- \$3.30/g, down 10.1 cents per gallon from last week’s \$3.40/g.
 West Virginia- \$3.33/g, down 6.9 cents per gallon from last week’s \$3.40/g.

“With oil prices plummeting due to new concerns over the U.S. economy after a poor jobs report, gasoline prices have seen downside in many states, with potential for more to join that trend this week as previous refinery disruptions in the Great Lakes region fade away and the restart process begins,” said Patrick De Haan, head of petroleum analysis at GasBuddy. “Diesel prices have also continued to drop, and while Tropical Storm Debby drops buckets of rain on Florida and the Southeast, it poses low risk to refineries or refined product pipelines, so the storm is not a major concern. With the Middle East on alert after Israel’s attacks on Hamas and Hezbollah, there could be an impact on oil prices; however, with an inability to predict the outcome, I for now expect gasoline prices in most states to gently decline in the week ahead, with the Middle East situation being a wildcard.”

GasBuddy

Therapist

from page 1

The Community Health Center of the New River Valley is a nonprofit organization providing affordable and high quality medical, dental, behavioral, and preventive health care services to people of all ages, regardless of ability to pay. For more information about the Community Health Center’s services and programs in Dublin, Christiansburg, Pearisburg, and at Pulaski County High School, visit our website at www.chcnrv.org or call 540-381-0820.

CHCNRV

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Give us your view: editor@ourvalley.org

The News Messenger is a newspaper of, by and for the people of Montgomery County. We encourage letters from our readers on topics of general interest to the community and responses to our articles and columns. Letters must be signed and have a telephone number where you can be reached for verification. All letters will be verified before publication. We reserve the right to deny publication of any letter and edit letters for length, content and style.

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- Linen vestment worn by priests
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 - Brew
 - Bake eggs in their shells
 - Serviceable
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 - Supports trestletree
 - Parian Chronicle
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 - Greek famous for fables
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 - Dispatches by mail
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 - Aah
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 - Before
 - Fixed in one’s purpose
 - Madames
 - Frosts
 - City drains
 - Baseball playoff
 - Cruise
 - Steeple
 - Precipitation
 - Cas ___: winter melons
 - A unit of two
 - Viewed
 - Taxis
 - 4840 square yards
 - London radio station
 - Perform work regularly
 - Longest geological time



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OBITUARIES

Henderson, Christine Mae

Christine Mae Henderson, of Blacksburg, passed away Aug. 6, 2024.

Mae was born Feb. 25, 1935 in a log house on Brush Mountain. Our dad, who was a beekeeper, said the bees were flying the day his baby girl was born. She was the daughter of the late Percy C. Jones and Jessie Jones of Blacksburg. She was also preceded in death by her husband Gerald Henderson; son-in-law, Steve Phillips; sister Geraldine Jones Correll; and brothers, Dennis Jones and David Jones.



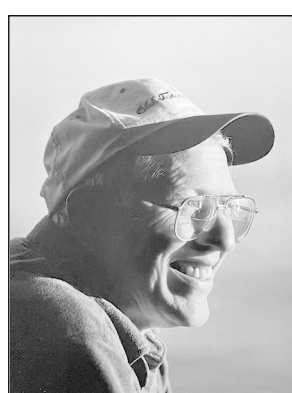
Christiansburg, and James Henderson (Rokeia Le) of Salem; great-grandchildren Emma Mae Henderson, Frankie Lynn Phillips, and Ivaleigh Grace Phillips; and many nieces and nephews.

Funeral services will be conducted today, Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024, at 2 p.m. in the McCoy Funeral Home Chapel with the Rev. Jerry Shepherd and Rev. Jube Burk officiating. Interment will follow in the Westview cemetery. The family will receive friends from 1 – 2 p.m., Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024, at McCoy Funeral Home.

A limb has fallen from the Family Tree. I keep hearing a voice that says grieve not for me. I am in heaven remember the good times, the laughter, the good life I lived while I was strong. Keep smiling and surely the sun will shine through. My mind is at ease, my soul is at rest. Remember all how I truly was blessed. Go on with your life don't worry about falls. I miss you all dearly. Until the day comes when we are together again.

Craigie, Carter Walker

Carter Walker Craigie, of Blacksburg, passed away Aug. 1, 2024, at age 86. He was born in Richmond to parents Walter Williams Craigie and Helen Walker Craigie. Carter was a graduate of Woodberry Forest School and Williams College. He earned a PhD from the University of Pennsylvania in 1976.



Blacksburg.

In 1975, Carter married Kay Cothran Craigie, who is also an active amateur radio operator. He was predeceased by brother Walter Willson Craigie and sister Harriet Craigie van Houten, both of Richmond. He is survived by Kay, daughter Jenny Riffe (Greg), grandchildren James Riffe and Evelyn Riffe who were the light of his life, and numerous beloved nieces, nephews, and cousins.

Despite life-long challenges with learning disabilities, Carter became a beloved educator. He taught fifth grade at Montgomery Country Day School in Wynnewood, Pa. For 25 years he taught at Cabrini College in Radnor, Pa., retiring in 1995 as professor of English and Communications.

An enthusiastic amateur radio operator, Carter served as an emergency preparedness volunteer communicator in both Pennsylvania and Virginia. Most recently he volunteered for the National Weather Service Forecast Office in

Blacksburg.

He was a member of Newport-Mount Olivet United Methodist Church.

In lieu of flowers, his family suggests donations to the Giles County Christian Service Mission, 516 Wenonah Avenue, Pearisburg VA 24134.

A Celebration of Life will be held at Unity Christian Church of Radford on Sept. 14 at 6:30 p.m.

The Craigie family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory.

ANGLICAN CATHOLIC

St. Peter the Apostle Anglican Church, 230 W. First St., Christiansburg, VA. Fr Peter Geromel OHI Th.M., Vicar, Fr. Alex Darby, "Associate", 540-382-0432/540-270-9166. Sundays: 8:00 am & 10:00 am Holy Eucharist followed by Christian Education and refreshments. Holy Communion most Thursdays at 12Noon, other Holy Days as announced. Traditional services use the 1928 Book of Common Prayer and 1940 Hymnal. Handicapped accessible. All are welcome. Come worship with us! Website: www.stpetersacc.org. Follow us on Facebook

St. Philip's Anglican Church, 306 Progress Street, NE, Blacksburg, Virginia 24060, (540) 552-1771, www.stphilipsblacksburg.org. Reverend Fr. Wade Miller, Priest. Eucharist Sundays at 11am and Wednesday's at 12pm.

St. Thomas Anglican Church - located at 4910 Hubert Rd, NW Roanoke, Va. Traditional Liturgical Lenten Services, Sunday at 10:30 am. Call (540) 589-1299 or visit www.stofc.org for midweek masses and events. (In Roanoke, go E on Hershberger, L on Hubert to 4910).

BAPTIST

First Baptist Church on 3rd Ave., 215 Third Ave at the corner with Downey St. We nurture meaningful connections to God and others through worship, spiritual growth, and community ministry. We celebrate the dignity and worth of all persons, created in the image of God. Sunday Bible Study Groups - 9:45, Sunday Worship - 11:00. Website: fbcradford.org 540-639-4419. Worship is in-person and live-streamed on Facebook and on our YouTube channel: First Baptist Church Radford.

Trinity Community Church, 1505 N. Franklin Street, C'burg. John Altizer, Lead Pastor, Brian Cockram, Associate Pastor, 382-8121. Worship at 10:45 a.m., Outreach Ministries - 6:00p.m. Wednesday, Growth Groups - 5:00p.m. Sunday, Youth and Children's Ministry - 5:00p.m. Sunday, www.trinitycburg.org

CHURCH OF CHRIST

Blacksburg Church of Christ, 315 Eakin St., 552-1331. Sun. Bible Classes 9:30 a.m., Sun. Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6 p.m., Wed. Bible classes, 7 p.m., Outreach Minister Curt Seright, Dean Meadows, Campus Minister.

Faith Christian Church of Christ, 305 3rd Street, Christiansburg, David Rhudy, Minister, 382-4628, Sunday School 10 am; Worship 11 am; Evening Worship 6:30 pm; Wednesday night Bible Study for Women and Men 6:30 pm. We welcome you to any and all of our services.

CHURCH OF GOD

New Hope Church of God, 1404 Mud Pike Rd., C'Burg. Rev. T. Michael Bond, pastor, 731-3178. Sun. School 10 a.m., Worship 10:50 a.m., 6 p.m. Thurs., 7:00 p.m.

West Radford Church of God, 1824 West Main Street, Radford, VA 24141, Sunday School—10:00A.M. Morning Worship— 11:00A.M., Children's Church 11:00A.M. Sunday Evening – 6:00P.M., Wednesday Night – 7:00P.M., Pastor Danny Newman, Church Office – 540-639-6562 or 804- 921-0828.

CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN

Christiansburg Church of the Brethren, 310 South Franklin Street. Pastor: Hal Sonafrank, 1-336-583-4822. Morning Worship 11 a.m.; Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Wednesdays. Website: www.christiansburgcob.org. A loving family, fueled by the Holy Spirit, grounded in God's Word, and delivering Jesus forgiveness and love to all people. Come as you are... you are welcomed!

(DOC - DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)

Snowville Christian Church, 5436 Lead Mine Rd., Hiwassee, VA 24347, Pastor: Jerry King, Website: www.SnowvilleChristianChurch.com (and Facebook), Office: 540-633-3761, Email: office@SnowvilleChristianChurch.com, Sunday Worship Service: 11:00 a.m., Sunday School: 10:00 a.m., Thursday Bible Study: 6:00 p.m., We are: "Inspiring hope, helping people grow their faith, and sharing God's love with others!"

EPISCOPAL

Grace Episcopal Church, 210 Fourth Street Radford. Welcoming and accepting, we have been a part of the Radford community for more than 130 years. ALL ARE WELCOME. Grace offers an 8:00am Contemplative Eucharist and a 10:30am Eucharist with organ music and a choir, with refreshments served afterwards. The 10:30am service is also available on YouTube for those unable to leave their house. Find us on Facebook and www.graceradford.org.

St Thomas Episcopal Church, 103 East Main Street, Christiansburg VA, 24073. Worship and communion

Montgomery County

WORSHIP DIRECTORY

Stolen Hearts

Read 2 Samuel 14:1 through 15:37

Absalom, King David's son, did not have an easy life. He fled from home after killing his half brother for raping his sister. Eventually he was allowed to return home, but his relationship with his father was strained. Absalom undermined his father's authority by promising that he would be a more compassionate ruler than David.

Absalom behaved in this way toward all the Israelites who came to the king asking for justice, and so he stole the hearts of the people of Israel (2 Samuel 15:6).

Just as Absalom worked to steal the hearts of the people from David, so the devil works to steal the hearts of people from God. The devil tries to get people, even Christians, to doubt God's justice or care and make them think they would be better off without God. God never promised that hard times wouldn't come, but He has promised to be with believers and help them make it through trials. Knowing He will never leave or forsake believers can help us dispel doubts and keep our hearts true to God.

Prayer for Today: Lord, help me guard my heart so I will never doubt Your love and care for me.

Quicklook: 2 Samuel 15:1-6

If your church is not listed and if you are interested, call Wendi Craig at 276-340-2445 or email at advertise@mainstreetnewspapers.com

at 10:00 a.m., each Sunday, followed by hospitality coffee and Adult Sunday Adult Seminar. Our service is also streamed. Contact for more info: mystthomasoffice@yahoo.com. http://www.stthomaschristiansburg.dioswva.org

LUTHERAN

Luther Memorial Lutheran Church ELCA, 600 Prices Fork Rd, Blacksburg. Weekly Online Worship at www.lmlc.org. We are a Reconciling in Christ congregation that welcomes and affirms all people just as they are. For information on Bible studies and Wednesday Vespers, email luthermemorialblacksburg@gmail.com, or contact the church office, (540) 951-1000. Rev. Monica Weber, pastor.

Our Saviour Lutheran Church ELCA, 1845 Cambria St NE, Christiansburg. Celebrate Word and Sacrament as we worship with varied liturgy, hymns and music. Join our inclusive community in person or online Sundays at 10:00 am(youtube.com/@OSLCCburg), followed by refreshments and fellowship. Ministries include Bible study, choir, food ministry, and crafters. Little Free Pantry and Library available 24-7 by the parking lot. Parent's Morning Out offers faith-based activities and play for children 16 month - 5 years select weekdays. Wheelchair accessible. Learn how you may contribute to our ministries at www.oslc-cburg.org. 540-382-2223.

St. Michael Lutheran Church, 2308 Merrimac Road, Blacksburg, VA 24060. Worship service each Sunday at 10 AM, Sunday School 9 AM. We are a community of God's people where we gather for worship, learning and service. Visitors and new members are always WELCOME! Google comments: "Wonderful, welcoming congregation." A place where all are truly welcome." You'll love our minister, The Rev.

Dr. Wes Jamison, who engages us in God's word. St. Michael started and administers Micah's Caring Initiative which includes Micah's Backpack, Soup for Seniors, Garden, Closet, and Mini Pantry, with tremendous community impact. Partnering with Rainbow Riders and Total Action for Progress, we opened the first Early Childhood Head Start in our community (6 weeks to age 3). We sponsor an awesome Scouting program of Scouts Boy & Girl Troop, Venture Scouts for older youth, and a Cub Pack for girls & boys kindergarten - 5th grade, amongst many other programs. Directions: From Price's Fork Road, turn onto Merrimac Road. St. Michael is ~quarter mile on the left. For more information: Phone 540.951.8951; Email hope@stmlc.us; Website www.st-michael-lutheran-church.org

MULTI-CULTURAL NON-DENOMINATIONAL

Central Church, 803 Wadsworth Street, Radford. 639-3529. 8:30 a.m. Sunday Services: 8:30am; 9:45am Sunday School; and 11:00a.m. Child care is provided. www.centralmethodistchurch.com.

Christian Growth Center, 1850 Electic Way, Christiansburg, VA 24073 (beside Hubbell Lighting). Sunday Worship: 9:30am Prayer, 10:00am Service *Nursery Available. Lead Pastor: Todd Hallinan. Founding Pastor: Rob Sowell. Mission: Sow, Grow, & Go Sow Faith! Grow in Righteousness! Go into all the world in the authority of the believer! 540-382-2908.

PENTECOSTAL HOLINESS

Compassion Church, 1820 Second Street, Radford, 639-6287, Our music is passionate, our worship is real, and Pastor Chandler Jones brings relevant messages for everyone at any place on their journey, Sunday Worship Experience at 9:30 AM

& 11:00 AM, Wednesday Family Night at 7 PM, Children Ministry provided for all services. Our vision is to see all Saved. Freed. Restored. Fulfilled. Find us on facebook and Instagram

Merrimac Pentecostal Holiness Church, Rev. Richard Hall (540) 552-7194. pastorhall29@gmail.com. Sunday School at 10 a.m. and morning worship is 11 a.m. Evening service at 6 p.m. and Wednesday at 7 p.m.

Piedmont Pentecostal Holiness Church, 5007 Jewell Dr., Shawsville Va. Sunday morning service 11am. Pastor Tim Clyburn. 8 miles from Shawsville Rt 460, on Alleghany Spring Rd.

Walton Pentecostal Holiness Church, 4003 Morning Glory Rd., off Walton Rd. on Rt. 114. 731-1755. Lee Sarver, pastor. Sun. School 9:30 a.m., Worship 10:30 a.m. & 6: p.m., Wed., 7 p.m.

UNITED METHODIST

Asbury United Methodist Church, 500 Stuart Street, Christiansburg. 540-382-0743. Rev. G. Lance Presley. Sunday School, 9:45 a.m., Sunday Worship, 11:00 a.m. All are welcome.

St. Paul United Methodist Church, 220 West Main Street, Christiansburg. Rev. Mike Derflinger (540) 382-2410. Sunday Worship at 10a.m. with Children's Church at the same time, Sunday School at 9 a.m. Worship is in-person and Live-streamed on our YouTube Channel: StPaulUMCChristiansburgVA. All are welcome. Website: www.stpaulvaumc.org

WESLEYAN

Christ Wesleyan Church, 525 Harkrader Street, Christiansburg. Public Worship service at 11:00 AM. Sunday School for adults - 10:00 AM. Pastor: Gale Janofski 540-510-0952. The building is totally handicapped accessible. Website: christwesleyanchurch.org

OBITUARIES

Atkins, Anthony Ray

Anthony Ray Atkins, of Myrtle Beach, S.C., went to be with the Lord Aug. 5, 2024, at the young age of 50. He was born Dec. 6, 1973, in Blacksburg, graduating in 1991 from Christiansburg High School.

Anthony was preceded in death by his maternal grandparents, Robert and Olive Kelly and paternal grandmother, Russelle Atkins; mother Katheryn Hope Kelly; and sister Jennifer Grace Atkins.

He is survived by his father, Allen Ray Atkins (Deborah) of Myrtle Beach, S.C.; brother, Robert Allen Atkins (Rachel); nephew Sam and niece Isabelle Atkins,



of Philadelphia, Pa.; and stepbrothers Jason Kirkner (Stephanie), of Riner, and Paul Kirkner (Kristi), of Aynor, S.C. He was also survived by many uncles, aunts and cousins. Anthony had a very special friend Matt Adkins whom he considered as a brother.

The viewing will be held at McCoy Funeral Home, Blacksburg, today Saturday, Aug. 10, 2024, 2 - 4 p.m.

A private burial will be held on Sunday for family only.

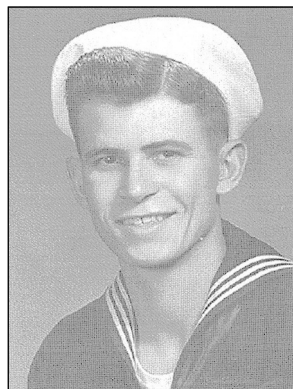
The family would like to thank McCoy Funeral home for their exceptional care to the family during this difficult time. Donations can be made to the American Diabetes Association.

Akers, Frank "Willard"

Frank "Willard" Akers, 97, of Dublin, joined his beloved wife, Giny, in their eternal resting place Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024. Summarizing a near century of life is no easy task. We could fill pages with funny stories and various anecdotes, but we will try to do what Willard could not: keep our words short and sweet.

If you knew Willard, chances are you enjoyed fresh vegetables from his garden or found yourself caught up in one of his mischievous schemes. You likely have a funny story or two to share, and you probably remember him either pushing a lawnmower or cruising around town in his little red truck – with or without random objects tumbling from the bed.

Willard was not known for his mild temperament, but rather for his love for his family and his service to his community and country. He was a lifelong resident of Pulaski County, born on April 25, 1927, in Belspring, to Frank and Annie Akers. He was the oldest of four children born to the pair before losing his mother in 1936. He then gained a second mother, Mary, and five additional siblings in the years following. Willard graduated from Dublin High School in 1945 and went on to play semi-professional baseball and serve his country in the United States Navy before marrying the love of his life, Virginia (Giny) Lee Ratcliffe, on November 19, 1955. He worked for Klopman/Burlington Mills until his retirement in 1986 but remained active over the next 38 years. As a dedicated member of the Dublin Lions Club for 64 years, he found joy in serving his community and caring for his family and friends. He could be found at the local ballpark, football field, gymnasium, or fairgrounds, cooking his favorite Lion Dogs or causing a commotion somewhere around town. He was a pillar of Belspring Presbyterian Church and overseer of Hickman Cemetery for over 50 years.



Willard was preceded in death by his wife, Virginia Ratcliffe Akers; his parents, Frank and Annie Akers; step-mother, Mary Akers Alger; brothers, Raymond and Pete Akers; and sister, Barbara Akers.

Survivors include his daughters, Karen Akers (Bill Wirt) and Lisa Buckner (John); granddaughters, Kara McCulloch (Geoff) and Keli Lichty (Chris); great grandchildren, Hayley, Taylor, and Cade (Faith) McCulloch, Eleanor and Anne-Marie Lichty; one great-great-granddaughter, Nova McCulloch; siblings, Robert Akers (Lois), Sylvia Akers Farmer, Larry Akers, Walter Akers (Shelba), and Imogene Setliff (Dennis); and many other relatives and friends. He adored his immediate and extended family, as well as those who were lucky enough to call him a friend.

The family will receive friends from 11 a.m. until 1 p.m. on Saturday, August 17, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services will begin at 1 p.m. with Connie Ratcliffe officiating. Interment will follow in Hickman Cemetery in Pulaski County.

The family would like to thank Highland Ridge D Wing and Wythe Hospice staff for their support and compassion during this past month.

In lieu of flowers, Willard requested that donations be made to Belspring Presbyterian Church, PO Box 85, Belspring, VA 24058, or the Dublin Backpack Program, PO Box 577, Dublin, VA 24084.

In summary, we celebrate a man from humble beginnings who lived his life in service to others. Willard was outspoken, kind-hearted, ornery at times, and unapologetically himself. He loved his family and friends fiercely, and the world was undoubtedly a more interesting place because he was in it. Thank you for your service and love, Willard. Rest easy.

The Akers family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home and Crematory.

Quesenberry, Barbara Jean

Barbara Jean Quesenberry, 81, passed away Monday, Aug. 5, 2024, at her home in Christiansburg.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Ray Edward Quesenberry; parents, Elmon J. Quesenberry and Mabel Dalton Longnecker; and special grandparents who raised her, Lonnie Alvin Dalton and Mary Alice Rigney Dalton.

Survivors include her daughters, Debbie and Rhonda Quesenberry; sister, Nora Ockey; sister-in-law, Vada Dickerson Roberts; special cat, Sylvester; and many other relatives and friends.



The family would like to thank Dr. Gregory Beato, Medi-Home Hospice, nurses, Kimberly Thomas and Judy Tuttle, and her caregivers, Amy Stevens and Judy Epperly.

The family received friends Thursday, Aug. 8, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. Funeral services followed with Rev. Justin Quesenberry officiating. Interment followed in the Phillips-Kessler Cemetery in Indian Valley in Floyd County.

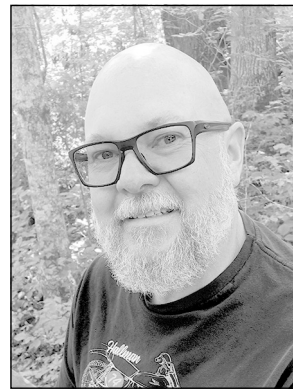
The Quesenberry family is in the care of the Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory.

Doyle, Jeffrey Lee

Jeffrey Lee Doyle, 51, passed away unexpectedly at his home in Draper Tuesday, Aug. 6, 2024. He was a truck driver and a first responder with RAAP Fire for 20 years.

He was preceded in death by his mother, Sadie Jean Doyle, and brother, Allan Doyle.

Survivors include his loving wife, Diane Doyle; daughters Faly Paige Doyle, Taylor Davidson and Erica Davidson; grandchildren Wyatt Gibas, Ean Davidson, and Carter



Gibas; father, Dennis Billy Doyle; brother, Barry Doyle (Melanie); brothers-in-law Aaron Sheets (Jessica), Mark Sheets, and Jeff Sheets; and many other relatives and friends.

The family will receive friends 1 - 2 p.m. Tuesday, Aug. 13, 2024, at the Mullins Funeral Home in Radford. A celebration of life service will begin at 2 p.m. with Pastor Doug Testerman officiating.

The Doyle family is in the care of Mullins Funeral Home & Crematory.

Baker, Virginia Layman

Virginia Layman Baker, 102, of Blacksburg, passed away Aug. 4, 2024, at home.

Virginia was born in Athens, Tennessee on Oct. 6, 1921. After graduating from Knoxville High School in 1940, she attended the University of Tennessee (UT). Virginia was initiated into the Honor Society of Phi Kappa Phi in 1943 and graduated in 1944 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Home Economics from UT.

She taught High School Home Economics in Benton, Tennessee before marrying Vernon Hunter Baker, the love of her life, in 1945. Virginia met Vernon at the First Methodist Church while at UT in Knoxville and they were loving partners together in all things; including family and various business ventures in radio and real estate. The Bakers were the founders of Positive Alternative Radio Inc., a non-profit ministry.

Virginia lived by a strong work ethic, retiring from her secretary/treasurer position for the family businesses at age 97. In her spare time, she read many forms of literature, researched the family genealogy, cooked favorite family recipes, planted and maintained her large flower and vegetable gardens, and preserved the gardens' harvest. Virginia was a member and longtime supporter of the Blacksburg United Methodist Church, and a member of the Allegheny Chapter of the National Society Daughters of the American Revolution (NSDAR).

Virginia was preceded in death by her parents, James Gilford and Clio Hutsell Layman; husband, Vernon Hunter Baker; sisters, Ruth Elizabeth Layman Walker,



Edith Clio Layman Hutsell and Ella Joyce Layman Murphy; brother, James Ray Layman; daughter-in-law, Judith Yvonne Jones Baker and, granddaughter, Alison Marie Baker.

She is survived by her children, Patsy Linda Baker, Edward "Eddie" Archer Baker, Carol Lavern Baker, Janice Marie Baker Fagan (husband Joseph), Vanessa Ann Baker Pavlik (husband Russell); grandchildren Eric Jason Crews, Jean Crews Piermattei (husband Steve), Diane Baker, Alan Baker (wife Audrey), Michelle Baker Hall (husband Seth), Kelly Fagan Anderson (husband Aaron), Andrew Fagan, Jessica Fagan Weedon (husband Chris), Erin Fagan Lewis (husband Alex), Eli Fagan, Hunter Pavlik (wife Mary Beth), Sean Pavlik (husband Stephen Salazar), Matthew Pavlik (wife Anna); sister Hazel Christine Layman Dake; eleven great-grandchildren and many nieces and nephews.

Visitation will be at McCoy Funeral Home at 1 p.m., Monday, August 12, 2024, with a memorial service following at 2 p.m. officiated by Pastor Brad Dulaney of Blacksburg United Methodist Church. Interment at Memorial Gardens of the New River Valley following the service.

The family would like to thank Intrepid USA Hospice in Radford, Virginia for their compassionate care.

In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made for Macular Degeneration Research to: A BrightFocus Foundation Program, 22512 Gateway Center Drive, Clarksburg, MD 20871.

Autonomous vehicle competition at Virginia Tech highlights workforce development, unique facilities

Nicholas Hoang had the opportunity to take the wheel designing vehicles that could operate without one.

"It was a really cool learning experience from start to finish because we were given so much freedom in how we wanted to design our vehicles," said Hoang, who graduated with a bachelor's degree in electrical and computer engineering in May. "Because we had that freedom, we got to think about different types of materials to use and different ways to configure our vehicles that we wouldn't usually get to experiment with."

Hoang was one of about 50 students from five universities to compete in the first East Coast RTX Autonomous Vehicles Competition hosted at the Virginia Tech Drone Park.

"We started this competition about four years ago in other areas of the country, like the Texas region," said Leonard Chen, Raytheon director for technology development. "But this is the first time the schools represented today have been able to compete."

Chen and a team of Raytheon engineers traveled to Virginia Tech to judge the competition.

The event was hosted by the Virginia Tech Hume Center for National Security and Technology, which is housed under the Virginia Tech National Security Institute. It was held at the Virginia Tech Drone Park, part of the Virginia Tech Institute for Critical Technology and Applied Science, which allows the vehicles to be in an environment that is fully enclosed - and able to operate free of certificate - but still open to the elements.

"It's a very safe flight environment," said Sarah Rhodes, Virginia Tech Drone Park operations and training manager. "We're completely separated from the national airspace, so we don't actually have to require special certifications like you would if you were conducting this competition anywhere else."

The members of Virginia Tech's autonomous vehicles team are part of a RTX Fellowship Program through the Hume Center, which serves as the hub for national security-focused experiential student learning and workforce development at the university. Students can learn more about ways to get involved at the Hume Center through internships, workforce development programs, and research opportunities at the upcoming Hume Center Undergraduate Research Open House on Aug. 28.

In addition to the Virginia Tech team, which was awarded second place, universities represented at the competition include George Mason University, which was awarded first place, and the University of South Florida, which was awarded third place, as well as George Washington University and Howard University.

In the months leading up to the competition, student teams built one fully autonomous air vehicle and one fully autonomous ground vehicle, both of which had to participate in a series of qualifying challenges.

At the competition, students were tasked with programming their autonomous air vehicles to recognize the ground vehicles of other teams



PHOTO BY CLARK DEHART FOR VIRGINIA TECH
Members of the Hume Center for National Security and Technology autonomous vehicle team preps their ground vehicle for a competition sponsored by Raytheon Technologies Corp. at the Virginia Tech Drone Park.

when flying overhead, triggering water to shoot from their air vehicle and hit other teams ground vehicles while also avoiding hitting their own.

The competition introduced students to challenges they may face in the workforce, which highlighted the importance of an interdisciplinary approach.

"What really made this possible for us is having people with different areas of expertise on our team," said

Ella Rasmussen, a Virginia Tech rising senior in computer science and secure computing. "We have members of our team in all different majors and people who prefer coding versus working on the physical vehicle and vice versa. We wouldn't have been able to bring it all together if everyone on our team had the same major and experience and thought about problems the same way."

Lindsey Haugh for Virginia Tech

MONTGOMERY SPORTS

No varsity football at Auburn this fall

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

The numbers game, or should we the lack of, will drastically two areas of high school football this fall in the New River Valley.

Auburn High School has announced it will not field a varsity team this year. Athletic Director Paul Dominy points to the lack of upperclassmen causing the problem at the Riner school. Two years ago, Auburn shut down their program half-way through its season. Last year, they were able to limp through a schedule, but not this year.

“We will not be fielding a varsity football team this fall. We had just two upperclassmen come out for football. We have 22 freshmen and sophomores

in the program and our middle school program is healthy, so we feel like this is a short-term step back to help sustain long term growth for the program,” Dominy said on Wednesday.

This does cause problems for the schools, which are on Auburn’s 2024 schedule. The school was slated to play a home benefit game Aug. 23 against Holston and then officially start the season Aug. 30 against Narrows. The rest of the schedule includes the entire Mt. Empire District group (George Wythe, Galax, Giles, Ft. Chiswell and Grayson County). Eastern Montgomery will also be looking to fill its Sept. 20 date. Craig County and Eastside will also need new opponents.

Meanwhile, the Virginia High School League is planning for lots of scheduling



FILE PHOTO

Auburn High School will not be fielding a varsity football team this season.

problems because of the lack of numbers in officials. This will be the second year seven-man crews could be as little as five, and games could also be played on nights other than the typical Friday ones. Thus,

Friday night games could be rescheduled for Thursday or Saturday nights. So far, no local school has reported rescheduling, but it could change quickly as the season starts in just three weeks.

Blacksburg’s adopted son now an Olympic medalist

Marty Gordon
NRVsports@ourvalley.org

Blacksburg’s adopted son, Cole Hocker, is an Olympic champion.

This past week, he took the 1500-meter gold. Just four years ago, he finished sixth, but at the 2024 Olympic Trials he took the win and set a personal record, setting the stage for this year’s race.

His win set a new Olympic and U.S. record with a 3:27.65 run.

Hocker, who was a NCAA champ at the University of Oregon, moved to Blacksburg in November to continue training under his former college coach, Ben

Thomas, who rejoined the Virginia Tech staff.

Success is no stranger to Hocker as he won multiple national titles while at Oregon. In 2021, he announced he would forgo his final year of eligibility to run professionally. But he didn’t expect that he would find a new home in southwest Virginia.

Matter of fact, Hocker bought a home in the area and packed everything he owned to join Thomas. Another former Oregon Duck, Cooper Teare, joined the two in Blacksburg.

The group formed “Team Sova,” a group that includes five other athletes that are training under Thomas, who returned to his alma mater last year as the head track and field coach for the Hokies.

Thomas spent 2018-22 as an associate head coach at the University of Oregon, leading its cross country and distance programs, and is a three-time USTFCCCA National Assistant Coach of the Year, having most recently won back-to-back indoor honors for the Ducks’ incredible success during the 2020 and 2021 seasons. He earned his first national award during his time at Virginia Tech following the 2017 season, becoming the first ACC assistant to ever win the award. Thomas is also a 10-time USTFCCCA Regional Assistant Coach of the Year, including four selections at Oregon.

Hocker and Shaw have completed a dream of both as the gold medal is coming back to our area.

Hokies part of USA Olympic experience

Two Virginia Tech alumni have been squeezing a little orange and maroon into their wardrobes the past couple of weeks while walking around Paris, a notable contrast to their customary red, white and blue attire.

Kaitlin Reese ’15 and James Morrison ’14 are representing Hokie Nation at the Summer Olympics, carrying the proverbial Virginia Tech flag among the athletes from more than 200 countries competing on arguably the world’s biggest sports stage.

These two, though, are not athletes, but they do find themselves sprinting daily while attempting to provide the perfect fan experience for the thousands of Americans visiting this historic city for the games.

Reese and Morrison are playing instrumental roles in orchestrating the festivities at Team USA House, a central gathering place for U.S. fans, athletes, and athletes’ families. Located at Palais Brongniart in central Paris, Team USA House features an array of activities for attendees, including Team USA athlete appearances, Olympic Games viewings, a Team USA Shop, and American and international food and beverage options. The activities also include daily programming such as medal celebrations, chats with current and alumni athletes, event previews, and more.

Team USA is open from noon until midnight and requires a ticket to gain access.

Reese played a prominent role in the planning of Team USA House events because of her position as an event manager for Wasserman Live, a division of Wasserman Media Group that focuses on live event production and operations across sports, music, entertainment, and culture. Wasserman Media Group is a marketing and talent management company that represents some of the world’s biggest stars, from country music icons Kenny Chesney



PHOTO COURTESY OF JAMES MORRISON

Virginia Tech alumni Kaitlin Reese (at left) and James Morrison oversee events at Team USA House in Paris as part of the Olympics.

and LeAnn Rimes to the NBA’s Klay Thompson and PGA Tour’s Ricky Fowler.

“My team and I were in charge of the audio, the video, the lighting, the stage, programming, the run of show, management, all of those kinds of aspects,” Reese said. “But Wasserman, as a whole, we’ve produced the whole house, from designing it to the furniture to the layout. So, it’s a big team effort.”

“My job specifically has been to help plan all the stage programming. So that’s all the special guest emcees and the Olympic legends that we’ve had come through the house. ... All the entertainment from the stage to roaming entertainment throughout the house with caricaturists and magicians, all of that, I oversaw, the developing and creating.”

Reese, a native of South Hill, Virginia, who graduated with degrees in public relations and communications from Virginia Tech’s College of Liberal Arts and Human Sciences, worked as a student in the marketing department for Virginia Tech Athletics before eventually moving into a full-time role after graduation. After spending a year in athletics marketing at Wake Forest, she took a position at CSM Production in 2022, a company that the Charlotte-based Wasserman Media Group acquired and later

rebranded as Wasserman Live.

Approximately a year ago, Reese was assigned her role not just with the Summer Olympics, but also the Paralympics taking place Aug. 28-Sept. 8 in Paris. She will end up spending six weeks in Paris.

“I was kind of shocked, but also excited that my boss, Kristin Devereaux [vice president, events for Wasserman Live], recognized my skills and talents would be of good use for this project and that she had faith in me to execute everything,” Reese said. “It’s a once-in-a-lifetime experience to go to the Olympics and help plan Team USA House.”

“I’m definitely in my daily groove of, ‘Oh, I’ve got to write the daily script. I’ve got to get the run of show done. I’ve got to meet the talent.’ But it’s rewarding to take a step back and soak it in and be like, ‘Oh, wow, me and my team are doing a once-in-a-lifetime thing.’ I keep telling everyone that, but it truly is. It’s cool to see everything come together.”

Not long after receiving her assignment, Reese sent Morrison a text, inquiring of his interest to be the DJ and handle all the music at Team USA House.

“It was kind of like disbelief,” Morrison said. “There’s no way. This is too good to be true.”

Morrison, perhaps better known by his stage name DJ TMMPO, has

served as the in-venue DJ for Virginia Tech Athletics events since graduation in 2014, handling the music for games, fan days, pregame festivities, and the department’s season-ending awards show, known as The Gobblers. He and Reese had collaborated on many of these events.

Morrison, who will spend three weeks in Paris, never really expected to become a noted DJ, much less work at the Olympics. He got his start as a 12-year-old when he and a friend served as co-DJs for a birthday party. Word got out, and he lived in a Chesapeake neighborhood with a community clubhouse, so he started landing jobs for birthday parties, Sweet 16 parties, and graduation parties, and then eventually to working high school ring dances, proms, and weddings.

He gradually expanded those opportunities after arriving in Blacksburg. By his junior year at Virginia Tech, he was being asked to DJ concerts, parties, the Relay for Life event, The Big Event, and of course, athletics department functions.

Still, his focus was on getting his undergraduate degree in corporate finance from the Pamplin College of Business with thoughts of maybe working on Wall Street.

“It [being a DJ] was always genuinely just a passion,” Morrison said. “It was a business that

wasn’t even trying to make money. It was just a good time.

“There were those little steppingstones throughout that kind of carried that journey forward. There was just something in my gut that said, ‘It’s in the music somewhere,’ and I don’t have words for it, even now. I ended up moving back home with my parents after graduation, and then I was back to Blacksburg 27 times from 2014 to 2015.”

Morrison eventually landed in Northern Virginia, becoming the production director for Hill City Church DC, a nondenominational church with services each Sunday at Edison High School in Alexandria. His job allows him the flexibility to work in other capacities, including as a creative director for a local nonprofit organization in Virginia Beach and his role as Virginia Tech Athletics’ DJ.

And of course, it provided him the freedom to accept Reese’s invitation of going to Paris.

“I was just humbled by the ask,” Morrison said. “That was enough for me. It’s really cool to see it all come to fruition, and coming from a military family, I bleed red, white and blue as much as I bleed maroon and orange. So this was a special ask for any magnitude of reasons, as it probably would be for anyone.”

Both Reese and

Morrison hope they are providing the ultimate fan experience for American visitors at the Games. Both compared Team USA House to Hokie Village, a family friendly football pregame festivity that takes place across from Lane Stadium hours before kickoff.

“There is something special about Hokie Village, and it’s the purity of it,” Morrison said. “It’s literally just about the spirit of what it means to be a Hokie, to support the Hokies and to be in that environment.”

“Team USA House is not in the Olympic Village, but it is that same spirit of solidarity and hype and cheering. Every inch and every turn are so meticulously executed, so well done, for the specific purpose of supporting our country, our athletes, our team as one, and the synergy between the past and now, it just gives me chills.”

The two of them even have added a little Virginia Tech flair to Team USA House, occasionally playing the popular “Enter Sandman,” which serves as Hokie Nation’s national anthem.

“Oh, you better believe it,” Morrison laughed when asked if he was playing “Enter Sandman.” “There is no greater song in this world for an athlete.”

Reese and Morrison expect to be exhausted at the end of their Olympic journey, though they won’t be leaving with any medals.

But they will be the first to tell you – this experience has been pure gold.

Virginia Tech

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

A	B	C		A	B	A		B	R	A			
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H	A	E		F	L	O							
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MONTGOMERY SPORTS

Four ACC teams in Top 25 of Preseason Coaches Poll

Four Atlantic Coast Conference teams were ranked in the top 25 of the Preseason US LBM Coaches Poll, powered by USA TODAY Sports.

Florida State came in at No. 10, ahead of Clemson at No. 14 and Miami at No. 19, while NC State was ranked No. 22 in the preseason poll.

Ranked in the top 10 all season long last year, the 2023 defending ACC Champions were picked to win the ACC title again this season in the ACC media preseason poll. The Seminoles return 10 starters from a 13-1 team last year that went a perfect 8-0 in conference play. While 2023 ACC Player of the Year Jordan Travis has moved on to the NFL, the Seminoles will turn to experienced quarterback transfer DJ Uiagalelei, who has appeared in 48 games with 40 starts and holds 30-10 record as a starter over his collegiate career. He has totaled 9,451 yards of total offense, throwing for 8,319 yards and 57 touchdowns and rushing for 1,132 yards and 21 touchdowns.

Clemson, which closed out the 2023 season with five straight wins started by a victory over nationally ranked Notre Dame (Nov. 4), returns 13 starters from last year's team, highlighted by eight on the offensive side of the ball including quarterback Cade Klubnik. Led by returners Peter Woods, T.J. Parker and Barrett Carter, the defense that led the ACC in fewest total yards allowed last season should once again be a strong point for the Tigers.

Miami's year-over-year growth as a program was notable from 2022 to 2023, Year 1 to Year 2, under Mario Cristobal and offensive coordinator Shannon Dawson and defensive coordinator Lance Guidry last year. The Hurricanes ranked 25th in the nation in total

offense in 2023, which was up 60 spots from 85th in 2022. The Hurricanes were also ranked 24th in total defense, up 40 spots from 64th in 2022. The addition of ACC Preseason Player of the Year in transfer quarterback Cam Ward from Washington State, whose 14,140 career yards of total offense are the most of any active player entering the 2024 season, the Canes also added two-time All-Pac-12 first-team selection and 2023 Doak Walker Award semifinalist Damien Martinez from Oregon State in the offensive backfield. Coupled with returning wide receivers Xavier Restrepo (1,092) and Jacolby George (864), who both ranked in the top three in receiving yards in the ACC last season, the offense has several weapons to turn to in 2024.

NC State head coach Dave Doeren, now in his 12th season in Raleigh, recorded nine wins last season to give his Wolfpack teams seven 8+ win seasons, four nine-win seasons and make nine bowl appearances. NC State, which enters the 2024 campaign as one of just five programs in the Power 5 conferences that have won eight or more games in each of the last four seasons, returns 2023 ACC Freshman of the Year in wideout Kevin "KC" Concepcion and has added several new pieces on the offensive side including transfer quarterback Grayson McCall from Coastal Carolina, running backs Jordan Waters from Duke and Hollywood Smothers from Oklahoma, tight end Justin Joly from UConn and wide receivers Noah Rogers from Ohio State and Wesley Grimes from Wake Forest.

Five other ACC teams received votes in Louisville (95), Virginia Tech (64), SMU (47), North Carolina (6) and Syracuse (1).

Florida State and Georgia Tech will kick off the 2024 college football season at the Aer Lingus College Football Classic in Week 0 on Saturday, Aug. 24, at noon ET in Dublin, Ireland. New member SMU will also be one of eight teams playing in Week 0, as the Mustangs will take on Nevada on Aug. 24 at 8 p.m. ET in Reno, Nevada.

All 17 teams will be in action over

Labor Day weekend, Aug. 29-Sept. 2, with 16 games spanning four days - Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and Monday. Boston College and Florida State will cap off Week 1 of the 2024 college football season with a Labor Day showdown in ACC play on Monday, Sept. 2, at 7:30 p.m. ET on ESPN.

Atlantic Coast Conference

Sports notes: Highlanders second-highest GPA in DI

Marty Gordon
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The NFCA (National Fastpitch Coaches Association) announced the top-10 Division I softball program GPAs on Tuesday afternoon, which included Radford University placing second, a program record.

With a 3.811 team GPA during the 2023-24 academic year, the Highlanders earned their second-placed ranking which breaks a program record. The mark is also the highest among Big South members. Radford finished just behind Southern Illinois (3.856), placing just above Youngstown State (3.781), George Mason (3.780) and Illinois State (3.779).

Additionally, 19 Radford student-athletes were named All-America scholar-athletes for their work in the classroom. The list of Highlanders earning the achievement included Cassi Barbato, Grace Bechtol, Abby Bossler, Tori Boyd, Morgan Cooper, Chloe Greene, Natalie Jones, Amanda Lee, Ellen Palya, Abby Peace, Malorie Reeves, Lexie Roberts, Kari Shedrick, Emily Smith, Rachel Smith, Kyndall Stanley, Abby Wilson, Amber Wolfe and Emma Yates.

The rankings and honors recognize the academic prowess of softball teams across the Association's membership categories. NCAA Division I led the way with 2,573 student-athletes earning a 3.5 grade-point average or higher for 2023-24.

The NFCA is the professional organization

for fastpitch softball coaches. Known for its highly regarded Awards Program, the NFCA also educates and supports softball coaches on a variety of different levels: from NFCA podcasts to a comprehensive drills database, to in-person events and a National Convention.

RU basketball tickets on sale

Season tickets for the 2024-25 Radford Men's and Women's Basketball season are now on sale at radfordtickets.com. To order tickets, call 540-831-7889 or visit radfordtickets.com.

Season ticket holds from the 2023-24 season can renew online at any time, reserve by phone, or

visit the ticket office in the Dedmon Center during normal business hours. Following the renewal deadline, preferred seating locations will be released to the general public on a first-come, first-serve basis and cannot be guaranteed.

Lady Hokies season tickets

With Virginia Tech women's basketball's upcoming season still three months away, Virginia Tech Athletics announced on Wednesday that both reserved and general admission season tickets are now sold out, showcasing Hokie Nation's excitement for the 2024-25 campaign.

A limited number of general admission single-game tickets will go on sale later this fall.

Tech president to lead Division 1 schools

The NCAA Division I Board of Directors has appointed Tim Sands, president of Virginia Tech, to serve as the board chair.

He replaces Jere Morehead, president of the University of Georgia, who concluded his term at the board's Aug. 6, 2024, meeting. Sands joined the board in January as a representative from the Atlantic Coast Conference and will serve as chair until August 2026.

The board is the top governing body for Division I, responsible for strategy and policy and overseeing management of the division. This includes focusing on the relationship between college sports and higher education, monitoring legislation and its impact on policies and goals, approving policies and procedures governing the infraction program, monitoring membership standards, and collaborating with staff on the best ways to serve NCAA members. Sands' role includes presiding at board meetings, chairing the administrative committee, and serving as spokesperson for Division

I. Sands is the 16th president of Virginia Tech. Over the past decade he has elevated the university's global land-grant mission of teaching, research, and engagement, and championed better access and affordability in higher education. A widely published researcher in the fields of nanotechnology, materials science, and optoelectronics and energy conversion devices, he is a fellow of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers, the Materials Research Society, and the National Academy of Inventors.

He serves as chair of the boards of the Universities Research Association and the Virginia Space Grant Consortium and is a member of the Board of Visitors of National Intelligence University. Sands earned his bachelor's degree with highest honors in engineering physics and a master's and doctorate in materials science from the University of California, Berkeley.

Virginia Tech

Changes announced for Big South Conference

Big South Conference Commissioner Sherika A. Montgomery has announced a restructuring of the conference's public relations department along with two staff promotions, in addition to an updated overview of the conference office departments.

The Public Relations Department has been re-named Communications and Branding to align with the department's evolution and expansion over the years. This move properly defines the staff roles and responsibilities of the Big South's external and strategic communications efforts, media relations and media services, digital and social media offerings, storytelling, messaging and content creation, and broadcast initiatives. Four full-time staff members and two annual interns comprise the Communications & Branding Department.

As part of the revamp, Director of Communications and Social Media Jordan Parry has been elevated to the position of Assistant Commissioner-Communications & Branding, and Associate Commissioner-Public Relations Mark Simpson has been elevated to the position of Senior Associate Commissioner-Communications and Branding.

The Conference Office Departments are now as follows (in alphabetical order):

- Basketball Success
- Business Operations Group
- Championships & Student-Athlete Experience
- Communications & Branding
- Compliance & Student-Athlete Services
- Corporate Sponsorships/Partnerships

"Over the last year, the conference office has welcomed new leadership at every level," stated Montgomery. "While strategically evaluating office structure and how to best serve the membership, opportunities for growth and advancement were presented. The conference office restructure accomplishes three key objectives: (1) clear designation of responsibilities and oversight, (2) delineation of focus areas/departments and (3) alignment of conference office priorities to best serve the membership."

Parry joined the Big South staff in October 2022 as Director of Communications and Social Media. He leads the conference's social media

and content development initiatives, spearheads annual upgrades to the league's graphics suite, communicates the league's messaging on @BigSouthSports platforms, and strategizes opportunities to maximize followers, reach, and engagement on social media. Parry also supports media relations and serves as the primary communications contact for women's basketball, baseball, and men's and women's soccer. He also assists with softball and women's lacrosse.

"Jordan brings a high-level of expertise and innovation to this important role," said Montgomery. "Under his leadership, multiple Conference social media platforms have experienced steady growth in followers, engagement and overall impressions. I am confident he will continue to be an invaluable asset in promoting and storytelling of the Big South Conference."

Simpson begins his 21st overall season on the Conference staff. He joined the office on August 30, 2004 as Director of Public Relations before his promotion to Assistant Commissioner-PR in July 2009, and was elevated to Associate Commissioner in 2018.

A member of the Senior Leadership Team, Simpson is responsible for all areas of the league's Communications & Branding efforts as well as media services and media operations for its 19 Division I sports. He serves as the primary communications contact for men's basketball and men's and women's golf, as well as supporting the publicity and promotional efforts with the Big South-OVC Football Association.

Simpson provides secondary communications assistance on various Big South sports, coordinates the Big South Hall of Fame and the Conference's records and archives, in addition to overseeing the league's social media and digital media content and strategies.

"Mark's unwavering commitment, professionalism and expertise have been consistent drivers in the storytelling and brand recognition of the Big South Conference for nearly two decades," Montgomery added. "He has led countless initiatives related to the positive and forward-advancement of the Conference."

Big South Conference

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51 W Main St. Radford, VA 24141

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Cynthia Mason cmason@helixelectric.com

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- Short- & long-term disability
- A retirement plan with employer match
- Employer paid life & AD&D insurance
- Paid apprenticeships

ONLINE AUCTION

Investment Property for Sale in Radford VA
Ends Thursday, August 22nd at 4 PM
1205 Downey St., Radford, VA 24141
Bid Now at VAAuctionPro.com





PREVIEW DATE: Friday, August 16th at 4 PM

Charming historical home with investment potential located just two blocks from Radford University and minutes from I-81. This corner property has +/-0.6267 acres and features a home built in 1949 with historical charm and investment potential. The residence has 5,572 square feet on 3 levels and a full basement, providing ample living space with 8 bedrooms and 4 bathrooms. Each level includes its own kitchen, making it ideal for multi-person living and potential rental opportunities. Home is heated by a gas hot water radiator system.

The ground level features a laundry room, den area, kitchen, and bathroom. 10 foot ceilings, oak hardwood floors, and a wood fireplace. The second level has 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, a kitchen and sitting area. The second level also includes a convenient exterior balcony entrance in addition to interior stairs. The third level offers 2 bedrooms, a kitchen, living room, and bathroom. The property's basement provides additional living space with 3 bedrooms, 1 bath, and a kitchen.

Outside, the home features a large front covered porch, a metal roof, and vinyl siding with cinderblock/rock foundation. Public water and sewer.

The property also offers two independent, separate cottages with a total of 730 sq ft of living space that adds to potential rental income.

The subject property consists of 2 adjoining parcels, 1205 Downey St. and 1201 Downey St. The house tract (1205) extends approximately 180' back to a 14' public alley. 1201 Downey St. is a vacant lot at the corner of Downey St. and 2nd Ave. The 2 combined parcels have approximately 178' of frontage on Downey St. and approximately 102' along 2nd Ave. The total area of the 2 lots combined is approximately +/- 0.6267 AC.

Street parking is allowed on Downey St. plus ample space beside the house and on the adjacent vacant tract. With its proximity to Radford University and potential for renovation, this property offers a unique blend of historical character and practicality, making it a compelling investment opportunity in a prime location.

Terms: 10% Buyer's Premium will be added to final high bid to arrive at contract price. Earnest Money Deposit of \$20,000 is required on the day of sale. Close on or before October 7th, 2024. Subject to seller confirmation. Property sold as is, where is with any and all faults. Buyer is expected to complete their own due diligence before placing a bid. Auction starts ending at 4 PM on August 22nd, 2024. Please note that during the last two minutes of bidding, if a new bid is placed, the clock is automatically extended an additional two minutes. Be sure to register to bid early to ensure you receive notifications regarding any changes to the Auction, Bidder Packet and/or Pre-Auction offers received. Download Bidder Information Pack for complete terms and conditions, purchase contract and maps at VAAuctionPro.com.

CONTACT - Auctioneer Matt Gallimore at 540-239-2585 or email Gallimore.Matt@gmail.com. You can also contact Associate Broker Mauyer Gallimore 540-250-5051 or email gallimore.tm@gmail.com

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